Research consistently finds that schools and teachers play a critical role in the development of resilience in children and youth. The following seven strategies have been found effective:1

1. Get to know your students and their support contexts.
   - Be aware of the environments where students spend time outside of school; the environments can be enriching or problematic.
   - Know that even short-term intervention by a single caring adult can make a difference.

2. Discover and appreciate all student strengths, especially less conventional strengths and those of both challenging and withdrawn students.
   - Avoid focusing on deficiencies.
   - Accept that each student brings unique understandings, knowledge, and awareness.

3. Encourage students to get to know each other.
   - Encourage students to develop positive social relationships with each other.
   - Provide times and means to celebrate each student for who they are to appreciate their complexities.

4. Cooperatively develop parameters for a learning environment with high expectations.
   - Use students’ strengths to deal with their weaknesses.
   - Acknowledge the challenges that students face while maintaining high expectations and clear boundaries.

5. Set realistic, personal, and student-driven goals with each student and document those goals.
   - Ensure that every student has milestones to celebrate throughout the year.
   - Teachers can encourage deeper learning through opportunities for reflection with their students, using strategies such as student-led interviews.

6. Provide opportunities for meaningful participation for all students.
   - Create and monitor group projects that call on adaptive skills.
   - Encourage youth to take sensible risks and to make the world a laboratory for exploring outcomes.

7. Live resilience development as a process.
   - Systematically apply resilience principles in the classroom and school; they may provide a young person with the only or best environment to develop effective coping mechanisms.
   - Resilience development is a process that is worth it!

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A Resilient Response

In the following list, the first statement identifies everyday setbacks, and common non-resilient reactions (described in parentheses). Describe what a resilient response might be.

1. I did not get picked for the team I wanted. (I’ll never be any good.) _________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________

   **Hint:** Identify feeling and make a plan.

2. I did the wrong homework assignment or misunderstood it. (I’m going to fail.) ______________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________

   **Hint:** This is just a problem that needs to be solved.

3. A rain shower at recess time keeps everyone indoors. (I’m angry we can’t do anything because of the rain.)
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________

   **Hint:** Recognize disappointment and collaborate on a solution.

4. My best friend moves away. (I’ll never have another friend like that.) ______________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________

   **Hint:** Identify feelings around loss and eventually work on another relationship.

5. I’m angry about something. (Everything feels terrible, so I feel like I am going to lash out.) __________
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________

   **Hint:** Consider the consequences of violence, identify feelings, and manage a response.

6. I was the only person to trip, and I nearly fell. (This always happens to me, and everyone is laughing.) ____
   ____________________________________________________________________________________________

   **Hint:** Take responsibility for your part and remember that all people have accidents.